

What is claimed is:

1. A data transfer method effected in a library apparatus having a logically plurally divided housing unit, a turnout housing unit for housing temporarily a storage medium, and a robot for conveying the storage medium from the housing unit to the turnout housing unit or from the turnout housing unit to the housing unit, with a plurality of host computers being connected to the library apparatus, the plurality of host computers each making access to the logically plurally divided housing unit, the data transfer method enabling the storage medium housed in a first housing portion of the logically plurally divided housing unit to be used by the host computer making access to a second housing portion different from the first housing portion, the method comprising the steps of:
 - controlling the robot to convey the storage medium from the first housing portion to the turnout housing unit based on a medium conveyance instruction from a first host computer making access to the first housing portion;
 - after completion of the conveyance to the turnout housing unit, notifying a second host computer making access to the second housing portion different from the first housing portion that the storage medium has been conveyed to the turnout housing unit; and
 - controlling the robot to convey the storage medium that has been conveyed to the turnout housing unit, to

the second housing portion based on a medium conveyance instruction from the second host computer.

2. The data transfer method according to claim 1, wherein
5 the turnout housing unit is a volume access station acting as an inlet for the storage medium inserted into the housing unit and acting as an outlet for the storage medium ejected from the housing unit:

10 3. The data transfer method according to claim 1, wherein the turnout housing unit is a common housing portion included in common in the first housing portion and the second housing portion.

15 4. The data transfer method according to claim 1, wherein the housing unit is physically divided so as to correspond to the logical dividing, and wherein the turnout housing unit is a medium delivering mechanism for mediating the delivering of the storage
20 medium between the first housing portion and the second housing portion which are divided physically.

5. A library apparatus comprising:

a logically plurally divided housing unit;

25 a turnout housing unit for housing temporarily a storage medium;

a robot for conveying the storage medium from the

housing unit to the turnout housing unit or from the turnout housing unit to the housing unit;

a robot controlling unit for, based on a medium conveyance instruction from a first host computer making
5 access to a first housing portion of the logically plurally divided housing unit, controlling the robot to convey the storage medium from the first housing portion to the turnout housing unit, and thereafter based on a medium conveyance instruction from a second host computer making access to
10 a second housing portion different from the first housing portion of the logically plurally divided housing unit, controlling the robot to convey the storage medium that has been conveyed to the turnout housing unit to the second housing portion; and

15 a completion notifying unit for notifying the second host computer that the storage medium has been conveyed to the turnout housing unit, after completion of the conveyance of the storage medium from the first housing portion to the turnout housing unit..

20 6. The library apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the robot controlling unit and the completion notifying unit are included in a controlling unit for controlling the whole library apparatus.

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7. The library apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the turnout housing unit is a volume access station

acting as an inlet for the storage medium inserted into the housing unit and acting as an outlet for the storage medium ejected from the housing unit.

5 8. The library apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the turnout housing unit is a common housing unit included in common in the first housing portion and the second housing portion:

10 9. The library apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the housing unit is physically divided so as to correspond to the logical dividing, and wherein the turnout housing unit is a medium delivering mechanism for mediating the delivering of the storage medium between the first housing portion and the second housing portion which are divided physically.